

## **WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**TO: DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE -19<sup>th</sup> JULY 1999.**

**SUBJECT: SOUTH WEST WARWICK ( PROGRESS REPORT ).**

**FROM: PLANNING .**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT.**

1.1\_ This report is to appraise Members of the current position regarding the development of the South West Warwick housing and employment allocation (1100 dwellings and 20 hectares of employment land ).

1.2\_ The report will focus on the production of a revised Framework Brief (and why this is necessary), it will also outline the current position in relation to the ongoing negotiations concerning the Planning Gain package that it is intended that the site will deliver.

### **2. BACKGROUND.**

2.1 As Members will be aware , South West Warwick is one of the major housing allocations made by the Warwick District Local Plan. The development of the site is not straightforward because the Council is negotiating with several different landowners, and there are mineral reserves which need to be extracted prior to any development taking place. Furthermore , we are seeking an innovative form of development which moves away from a 'hierarchical' road layout and seeks to establish a more traditional 'lattice' network of roads. This has involved complex negotiations to agree the details of this new approach.

2.2 The Southwest Warwick Framework Brief was approved by Development Committee in September 1996. The brief set out the general principles for the development of the site and also listed the infrastructure and community benefits required.

2.3 Members will also be aware of the two planning appeals relating to this site by Bryant Homes and Stannifer (now Severn Trent). The appeals were heard in 1996, and an interim decision was not issued by the Secretary of State until September 1997. In his his interim decision the Secretary of State said that he was 'minded to grant' outline planning permission for the development set out in the relevant applications , subject to the appropriate conditions and the execution of appropriate planning obligations.

2.4 Progress with respect of this site has been further complicated by the need to revise the Framework Brief Concept Plan. This has had to be undertaken for a variety of reasons that will be outlined in section 4 of this report.

### **3. CURRENT POSITION - APPEAL BASED NEGOTIATIONS.**

3.1 Draft Unilateral undertakings concerning the funding and delivery of both on and off-site development requirements have been received from Bryants and Severn Trent for consideration . The issues raised have required extensive consideration and complex negotiation involving Officers of this Authority, our Planning Gain consultants (Fordham Research Services ) the County Council and the appellants .

- 3.2 The final determination in respect of the planning gain package will be made by the Secretary of State ,and while there are still some outstanding issues, considerable progress has been made , with your Officers striving to ensure that the funding / package represents the best possible outcome for both the development and the District.
- 3.3 The Secretary of State has received the comments of this Authority in relation to the planning gain / financial packages that Bryant Homes and Severn Trent have offered as a result of the negotiations. The Secretary of State is currently seeking further information from the appellants before issuing a final determination in due course,(at this point the financial package will become binding and outline planning permission will be granted to both developers).
- 3.4 Members may wish to know the range of issues that have been the subject of the negotiations:-

<u>Issue negotiations / current position</u>	<u>State of</u>
Improvements to Longbridge Traffic Island (junction 15 M-40 motorway).	Ongoing (see para 3.6 ).
Provision of Affordable Housing.	Agreed.
Education	Provision.
Agreed.	
Highway Improvements to Warwick Town Centre.	Agreed.
Highway Improvements ( immediate vicinity of site ).	Agreed.
Cycleway Contribution	.
Agreed.	
Contribution towards a Bus Service.	Agreed.
Contribution to a Community Centre.	Ongoing
(see para 3.7 ).	
Contribution towards establishing a shop in the Local Centre.	Agreed.
Contribution to local Library Services.	Agreed.
Contribution to provision of sports pitches.	Ongoing.
Appropriate levels of informal open space .	Ongoing.
Financial contribution towards formal children's play areas / equipment.	Agreed.

- 3.5 Members must be aware that the financial packages itemised above are only representative of a pro - rata contribution, and in due course, the other land owners on the site will have to pay their share towards achieving the objectives set out above .
- 3.6 The Longbridge Island Improvements/ negotiations are particularly complex. Ultimately, the precise details are the subject of discussions between the developers , the Sec of State and The Highways Agency, they are currently focussing on how the financial package (several million pounds) will be assembled/delivered. The Secretary of State is particularly keen to ensure that this crucial element of the project is achieved successfully. The Sec of State will not issue his final verdict on the entire planning gain package until the Longbridge question is resolved, this is a major reason as to why progress on this site has been subject to delay.
- 3.7 This Authority recently approached The Sec of State to question the contribution towards the proposed Community Centre. Recently revised Government Guidance has set out that in certain circumstances it would be appropriate for developers to pay towards the future maintenance of such buildings. The Sec of State supported our intervention and has indicated that this is a case when this would be appropriate and has required the appellants to negotiate a relevant sum.
- 3.8 The provision of sports pitches is the subject of ongoing negotiations.
- 3.9 The Secretary of State will eventually issue A final draft of the planning gain package for consideration, by this time the finance involved should all but be settled. At this opportunity your Officers will ensure that the delivery / timing of the various elements will be fixed to the satisfaction of all the agencies involved (e.g. the Education Authority).
4. CURRENT POSITION REGARDING THE FRAMEWORK BRIEF PROCESS .
- 4.1 As a consequence of noise levels associated with the A46 (By-Pass), it has been necessary to revise the main Concept Plan that is within the Framework Brief. A section of land that abuts the A46 was proposed as housing , the noise levels have meant that this use would not be appropriate, and it is intended that this location should now be used for employment land. Thus has meant some radical alterations that have involved all party discussions.
- 4.2 In carrying out the adjustments to the layout this Authority has had to ensure that the levels of housing and employment land are maintained in line with the initial requirement set out in The Local Plan allocation.
- 4.3 Severn Trent have recently approached this Department to discuss the approach that could be used to deliver the employment development . Their architects have submitted ideas that Officers and our design consultants are studying, initial indications are that the approach is very close to our desired solution. At this point in time the two design teams are working-up the proposed layout to include it in the Framework Brief to be put before this Committee in due course.
- 4.4 The agreed positioning and format of junctions to allow access to the site has only recently been resolved. The County Council as Local Highway Authority have had to

study the proposed designs/locations in great detail to ensure their safety and adequacy to deal with the anticipated volumes of traffic. The result of this work can now be applied to the Concept Diagram within the Framework Brief.

4.4 It is intended that the revised Framework Brief (and concept plan) will be submitted to this Committee at the earliest opportunity and then a period of further public consultation will be required.

4.5 When the consultation process and any concerns raised have been addressed, it is intended to produce neighbourhood briefs that will provide greater detail in relation to specific areas of the site, thus affording the development industry greater certainty as to what this Authority will require in terms of urban design/layout standards.

4.6 It was hoped that the revised Framework Brief would be available for this Committee, however late discussions/ developments regarding the site have contrived to thwart this. As a consequence of the work that is now progressing it is envisaged that the final outcome will have greater detail and prove to be a far more robust document.

## 5. RELATED ISSUES.

5.1 Members will be aware that an element of mineral deposit will have to be excavated from the Southwest Warwick site before development can commence. Severn Trent and Bryant Homes have both submitted mineral applications that have been approved, however a condition of the permissions is that they cannot start excavating material until they have gained detailed planning permission.

## 6. CONCLUSION.

6.1 The negotiations regarding both the form of development and finance associated with Southwest Warwick have been protracted and very difficult due to the number of land owners and agencies involved. This site will provide a significant housing and employment development for Warwick District, and although mindful of the need to get this development 'on stream' to meet our housing need it is essential that a high quality outcome is delivered in terms of environment, infrastructure and community facilities.

## 7. KEY ISSUES STRATEGIES.

7.1 The proposed development at Southwest Warwick is in line with the Economic Development Key Issues Strategy, assisting the requirement of Policy ED8 to ensure the need for housing within the District for sale and rent is met.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS.

8.1 That Members note the progress in relation to this development as set out in this report.

- 8.2 That officers continue negotiations to deliver the planning gain package and finalise the Framework Brief that will be brought back before this Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Tony Ward .  
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Policy, Projects and Conservation.

**Background Papers :** Southwest Warwick Framework Brief (Sept 1996)

Warwick District Local Plan (adopted 1995 ).

Previous Development Committee Reports.

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**Areas in District Affected :** Warwick.